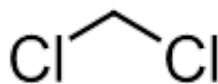


Methylene Chloride (Dichloromethane)

CH₂Cl₂



Summary of Health Effects

Methylene chloride causes certain types of cancers in animals and may affect the development and the brain and spinal cord of unborn babies. Studies show that humans can have these same health effects from methylene chloride.

How is methylene chloride used?

Methylene chloride is an industrial solvent in paint removers and degreasers.¹

Toxicity: What are its health effects?

The International Agency for Research on Cancer classified methylene chloride as possibly carcinogenic to humans.¹ The National Toxicology Program and the state of California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessments both consider methylene chloride to be a carcinogen.^{2,3}

Exposure by inhalation resulted in lung and liver cancers in laboratory animals.^{1,4} Multiple studies have associated increased rates of cancer, particularly of the breast, with occupational exposure to methylene chloride.² The Environmental Protection Agency conducted an Integrated Risk Information

System toxicological review of methylene chloride in 2010, which suggested that fetal exposure to methylene chloride may cause neurological and developmental effects in humans, similar to those seen in rats.⁵ The central nervous system is a potential target system in both humans and animals.⁵

Exposure: How can a person come in contact with it?

A person can come in contact with methylene chloride by breathing in contaminated air, drinking contaminated water, or eating contaminated food.^{2,4}

The principle route of exposure to methylene chloride is inhalation.^{2,4} It has been identified in the EPA's Urban Air Toxics Strategy as one of 33 hazardous air pollutants that present the greatest threat to public health in urban areas.⁶

In the 2014 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), levels of methylene chloride in the blood were below what can be detected by current testing technologies. It has been detected infrequently or not at all in previous surveys.⁷

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